

Minnesota (Mr. MINGE) would recognize the monument in New Ulm, Minnesota as a "national symbol for the contributions of Americans of German heritage." As the legislation points out, Americans of German heritage represent with one-quarter of the U.S. population, and yet there is no national symbol recognizing the contributions that have been made to this Nation.

The recognition provided by this measure is appropriate and I would like to commend the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE) for his very diligent work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that this concurrent resolution does not alter the status of the monument in any way, nor does it create any new Federal obligation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support it. I would again say that the effort on behalf of this legislation by the gentleman from Minnesota has really been outstanding, as many of us who serve on the committee know. He has, I think, talked to all of us individually, and to so many other Members on the floor, to bring this to the attention of the full House of Representatives. I also want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO), his colleague, for his work in lobbying on behalf of this legislation to give due recognition to the contributions of Americans of German heritage. Mr. Speaker, I urge its strong support.

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 89, which commemorates the many valuable contributions of German Americans to our society and culture through recognition of the Hermann Monument and Hermann Heights Park in New Ulm, Minnesota.

House Concurrent Resolution 89 designates a national symbol for the contributions of Americans of German heritage. German-Americans make up the largest ethnic group in the United States, yet we have no tangible symbols recognizing their contributions to our society. My resolution establishes the Hermann Monument and Hermann Heights Park in New Ulm, Minnesota as such a national symbol.

The story behind the historical figure Hermann is one of intrigue, valor and treachery that surpass any Hollywood script. Hermann was born into the nobility of the Germanic group called the Cherusker. He was sent to Rome for his formal education and military training. Hermann, then known as Arminius, was soon noticed as a natural leader and became a general in the Roman army. So highly regarded was he that Arminius was to help lead a campaign to conquer the Germanic peoples.

Despite his years in the Roman army, Arminius still cherished the independence of the Germanic peoples. Roman occupation of modern day Germany would surely have crushed the independent tribes. Arminius returned to his Germanic heritage and persuaded the tribes to unite in order to fend off the Roman invasion. They were successful

and the German people retained their freedom. The autonomy of these various regions formed the foundation of the current federal system of government in Germany. In Germany, he is still remembered as "the acknowledged liberator of the German race from Roman tyranny . . ." He symbolizes the independence of the German people.

That sense of freedom and independence stayed with the Germans for centuries. Millions of Germans came to America for opportunity, to escape economic or political oppression in their homeland and to lead a life with the freedoms guaranteed in our Constitution. As the immigrants settled throughout the country, they looked for a symbol of their heritage.

In 1885, at the Sons of Hermann Convention in Philadelphia, it was decided that a monument should be erected to honor Germans who came and helped build America. Hermann seemed the perfect symbol. Hermann was recast as a German-American symbol, representing the bravery, hard work, and unity they strived for in the New World. These immigrants found themselves in a new land, yet they remained true to their heritage. They felt pride that they had reached America, and in having established opportunity for the future.

The Hermann Monument stands at a crest of a hill overlooking the city of New Ulm and the Minnesota River Valley. To the residents of the heavily German-American New Ulm, the monument symbolizes the pride they take in their German heritage. To German-Americans scattered across the country, the Hermann Monument represents unity of the German people. The monument was built in Salem, Ohio and erected in New Ulm in 1897. This is truly a national symbol.

I would like to thank Representative JAMES HANSEN, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, for his assistance in moving this legislation. I would also like to thank Representatives GEORGE MILLER, DON YOUNG, and CARLOS ROMERO-BARCELÓ of the Resources Committee, for their support on this initiative.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all my colleagues support House Concurrent Resolution 89 and show their support for the contributions of German-Americans.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 89.

The question was taken.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FEDERAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ACT AMENDMENTS AND TO REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1237) to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to permit grants for the national estuary program to be used for the development and implementation of a comprehensive conservation and management plan, to reauthorize appropriations to carry out the program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1237

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM.

(a) ADDITIONS TO NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM.—Section 320(a)(2)(B) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(a)(2)(B)) is amended by inserting "Lake Ponchartrain Basin, Louisiana and Mississippi; Mississippi Sound, Mississippi;" before "and Peconic Bay, New York."

(b) GRANTS.—Section 320(g) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(g)) is amended by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and inserting the following:

"(2) PURPOSES.—Grants under this subsection shall be made to pay for activities necessary for the development and implementation of a comprehensive conservation and management plan under this section.

"(3) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of a grant to any person (including a State, interstate, or regional agency or entity) under this subsection for a fiscal year—

"(A) shall not exceed—

"(i) 75 percent of the annual aggregate costs of the development of a comprehensive conservation and management plan; and

"(ii) 50 percent of the annual aggregate costs of the implementation of the plan; and

"(B) shall be made on condition that the non-Federal share of the costs are provided from non-Federal sources."

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 320(i) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(i)) is amended by striking "\$12,000,000 per fiscal year for each of fiscal years 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, and 1991" and inserting "\$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2000 through 2004".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BORSKI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN).

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1237, introduced by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON), reauthorizes and improves the National Estuary Program, a broadly supported, nonregulatory approach to estuary conservation and management.

Under the current National Estuary Program, the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, provides assistance to States, local governments, and other interested parties to form a management conference for an estuary of national significance and to develop a

long-term management plan for that estuary.

A total of 28 estuaries are currently in the National Estuary Program, known as NEP, and an estimated \$50 billion will be needed to restore and to protect them. The majority of the estuaries in the program have already developed their long-term management plans and are now trying to implement them.

Unfortunately, the Clean Water Act, section 320, only allows Federal assistance for development of these plans and not for implementation. Passage of H.R. 1237 would authorize the Environmental Protection Agency to provide assistance for management plan implementation as well as development.

This bill is important for taking the next step to restore and protect our Nation's estuaries which provide important environmental and economic benefits to the entire Nation.

I thank the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, on which I serve, and their bipartisan leadership on both the full committee and the subcommittee. They deserve our thanks for their assistance in bringing this bill to the floor for action.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the passage of H.R. 1237, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1237, to amend and reauthorize the Environmental Protection Agency's National Estuary Program.

Estuaries and coastal environments are precious natural resources that need to be restored and protected. They provide essential habitat for numerous fish and wildlife especially suited for life at the shore. In addition, estuaries provide important recreation areas, transportation linkages, and sources of residential and industrial water supplies vital to the needs of this country.

Recognizing the importance of estuary areas, in 1987 Congress amended the Clean Water Act to establish the National Estuary Program to promote comprehensive planning for long-term protection of our Nation's estuaries. This program authorized funding for the development of Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans for estuaries of national significance.

Currently, 28 estuaries have been incorporated into the National Estuary Program. Of this number, 21 have completed the developments of their CCMPs and have begun implementation of the conservation plans. Funding for implementation has been provided predominantly by State and local organizations. Only limited Federal funds have been provided through the annual appropriation process since 1998.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation under consideration today would amend the National Estuary Program to specifically authorize Federal funds for use in implementation of the CCMPs. H.R. 1237 would reauthorize the NEP through fiscal year 2004, and raise the authorization level to \$50 million per year to ensure that greater funding is available for implementation of the management plans.

In addition, H.R. 1237, as amended by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, would authorize two additions to the list of estuaries eligible for priority consideration under the NEP. This would permit the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to begin the process of developing CCMPs for the Mississippi Sound and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin. I want to commend our committee colleagues, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR), the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON) for their work on this issue.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman SHUSTER) and the gentleman from New York (Chairman BOEHLERT) for their willingness to address the issue of treatment works as defined by the Clean Water Act and the application of section 513.

Mr. Speaker, I support the bill and urge its approval.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BORSKI). He has always been constructive and he has done a great job as the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment. And I certainly thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), the ranking member of the full committee, and I think we all thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) for their very precise and hard-fought efforts for this very worthwhile legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a cosponsor of H.R. 1237. This bipartisan bill has great benefits to the people in my home State and I urge my colleagues to support it. H.R. 1237 reauthorizes the National Estuary Program, or NEP, which in turn provides desperately needed grants to improve the habitat, water quality and diverse plant and wildlife that depend on our Nation's estuaries.

In Oregon, the NEP has included the Lower Columbia River Estuary. Because of the NEP, the citizens businesses and governments of Oregon have been able to focus on the 146 miles of tidally influenced waters below the Bonneville Dam. The NEP requires the estuaries to create a management plan. The Columbia River plan defines specific actions for

habitat, land use, and conventional and toxic pollutants. This common sense measure will serve fish and wildlife habitat and water quality in three important ways: prevention of further loss, protection and enhancement of existing resources, and restoration where damage has already occurred.

Mr. Speaker, one-in-six jobs in Oregon depends on the Columbia River. This magnificent river is home to many diverse animals and plants. In the Northwest we are faced with the challenge in ensuring that several of these species of plants and animals do not go extinct. Furthermore, in many of these resource-based communities, it is additionally challenging to ensure that the economies are developed and have a voice in the protection of their estuary.

With participation in the NEP, the Lower Columbia River Estuary Program has analyzed the problems with the estuary and has developed recommendations for dealing with them. Whether it is preserving the biological integrity of the estuary, mitigating the impacts of human activity and growth, controlling the entrance of conventional and toxic pollutants or engaging in public awareness, the NEP assists Oregon and other communities like it around the Nation.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1237.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman SHUSTER and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for their hard work and dedication to the National Estuary Program (NEP) and their support of reauthorization of H.R. 1237 with the requested amount of funding. H.R. 1237, which I introduced, will reauthorize the NEP at \$50 million annually for FY 2000 through FY 2004 and allow Federal funds to be used for implementation, in addition to development of Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans (CCMPs.)

Congress recognized the importance of preserving and enhancing coastal environments with the establishment of the National Estuary Program, as section 320 of the Clean Water Act Amendments of 1987. This popular program has not been authorized since 1991, but appropriately continues to be funded. The NEP's purpose is to facilitate state and local governments' preparation of "Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans" (CCMPs) for threatened and impaired estuaries.

In support of this effort, section 320 authorizes the EPA to make grants to States to develop CCMPs for 30 designated estuaries across the country. While the NEP has been successful in developing these CCMPs (20 of which have been completed), the law does not authorize appropriations for implementation of the CCMPs—a deficiency which threatens to slow our progress in restoring these estuaries.

My own State of New Jersey has three approved sites in the NEP, one of which, Barnegat Bay, lies primarily within my District. The Barnegat Bay watershed drains from a land area of approximately 550 square miles.

Over 450,000 people live within the Barnegat Bay watershed. That population doubles in the summer as people flock to the shore. The continued economic health of the Barnegat Bay watershed is dependent on the

continued health and natural beauty of its waters. The Barnegat Bay Estuary is not only a vital component of New Jersey's tourist industry, but is an important natural resource that supports populations of commercially and recreationally significant fish and rare and endangered species.

Non-point source pollution, while diffuse, is cumulatively the most important issue in addressing adverse impacts on water quality and the health of living resources in the Bay. The contaminants found in rain and snowmelt, as well as groundwater, contribute to non-point source pollution. The Final Comprehensive and Conservation Management Plan for Barnegat Bay will be available to the public in May 2000 for public review. But without the additional funding for this program, as well as explicitly permitting the NEPs to use Federal funds for implementation of their programs, the Federal government would have absolved itself of responsibility as a partner with the states in protecting and enhancing the Nation's most endangered habitats.

Therefore, I would like to thank my colleagues for supporting this important bill and protecting our Nation's natural resources for future generations.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1237, the National Estuary Program (NEP) Reauthorization. In 1987, the National Estuary Program was established to promote protection and restoration of the health of estuaries and their living resources. This program has made a profound difference nationally. This program has been tremendously important to the restoration of Galveston Bay which borders my district in Texas.

In 1995, the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP) received approval for its Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) to improve water quality and enhance living resources. Galveston Bay's watershed lies in one of the most heavily industrialized and most heavily populated regions in the United States. Wastewater discharges from communities and industries in Galveston Bay account fully for half of Texas' total wastewater discharges every year. Since some pollution entering the Houston Ship Channel comes from industrial businesses located along or near the Channel, GBEP worked with the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission to decrease the amount of pollution through source reduction and waste minimization techniques. Together they developed one of the largest voluntary prevention programs in the country. Under this program, businesses located along or near the Channel are selected to voluntarily participate in environmental training and to submit to pollution prevention audits. Lessons learned from GBEP's voluntary program have been incorporated into the State's Clean Texas 2000 program.

GBEP has funded the Galveston Bay Foundation (GBF) Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program to not only monitor water quality but also recruit and train volunteers, obtain and distribute monitoring supplies and equipment. GBEP has also developed the Galveston Bay Information Center Project, a vital project to preserve long-term access to Galveston Bay research and information to prevent losses of data and information had occurred in the Bay's history.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, the National Estuary Program has been instrumental in preserving and protecting America's treasured bays and estuaries including Galveston Bay. This legislation should be adopted.

I challenge my colleagues who support reauthorization of this vital program to take the next step to protect the almost 40 percent of our Nation's estuary waters under threat. I urge you to sign on as sponsors of H.R. 1775, the Estuary Habitat Restoration Act of 1999. To date, this legislation, which Representative GILCHREST of Maryland introduced last May along with myself and many others now has 121 cosponsors. The legislation would provide dedicated Federal funds to habitat restoration for estuaries like Galveston Bay. Moreover, H.R. 1775 would enhance the work of the National Estuary Program by developing new ways to optimize the numerous existing Federal restoration programs. It also promotes voluntary community estuary restoration efforts and the establishment of public-private partnerships to work with community-based organizations and local governments to protect estuaries.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1237 and reauthorize this vital national program for another five years. We must strive to promote efforts on the local level to develop and implement long-term estuary conservation and management plans.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1237, introduced by Representative JIM SAXTON, would reauthorize and improve the National Estuary Program, a broadly supported, comprehensive approach to estuary conservation and management.

I want to thank the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman BUD SHUSTER, Ranking Democratic Members Representative JIM OBERSTAR, and BOB BORSKI, the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee Ranking Democratic Member, for their leadership and assistance.

Under the current National Estuary Program, EPA provides assistance to State, local governments, and other interested parties to form a management conference for an estuary of national significance, and develop a comprehensive conservation and management plan for that estuary.

Of the 28 estuaries currently in the National Estuary Program, 21 have finished this planning process and are now trying to implement their management plans.

Unfortunately, section 320 only allows Federal assistance for development of these plans, and not for implementation.

Passage of H.R. 1237 would authorize EPA to provide assistance for management plan implementation, as well as development.

This bill will help protect and restore our Nation's estuaries—those natural resource treasures that are constantly under siege, yet continue to provide invaluable environmental and economic benefits to the entire Nation.

I strongly support passage of H.R. 1237 and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1237, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Edwin Thomas, one of his secretaries.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 1237, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING NECESSITY TO EXPEDITE SETTLEMENT PROCESS FOR DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS AGAINST DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE BROUGHT BY AFRICAN-AMERICAN FARMERS

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 296) expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the necessity to expedite the settlement process for discrimination claims against the Department of Agriculture brought by African-American farmers.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 296

Whereas the Secretary of Agriculture has conceded that the Department of Agriculture and agents of the Department discriminated against certain African-American farmers during the period from 1981 through 1996 in the delivery of Commodity Credit Corporation and disaster assistance programs;

Whereas, to permit the resolution of complaints that were filed by these farmers before July 1, 1997, but not responded to by the Department of Agriculture in a timely manner, section 741 of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (112 Stat. 2681-30; 7 U.S.C. 2279 note; as contained in section 101(a) of division A of Public Law 105-277), waived relevant statutes of limitation that prevented the adjudication of these complaints;

Whereas, on April 14, 1999, United States District Judge Paul Friedman issued a final opinion and order that finalized class action lawsuits filed by African-American farmers;

Whereas the farmers were ordered to file claims to determine their eligibility for the settlement ordered by the court;